

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL TORONTO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2638

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMCONSUL CALGARY

AMCONSUL HALIFAX

AMCONSUL MONTREAL

AMCONSUL QUEBEC

AMCONSUL ST

AMCONSUL VANCOUVER

AMCONSUL WINNIPEG

UNCLAS TORONTO 0562

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: EFIN, SCUL, CA

SUBJ: CANADIAN CONTENT ASPECTS OF TIME-READER'S DIGEST TAX
CHANGES

REF: OTTAWA 0976

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF EDITORIAL ENTITLED '80 PERCENT CANADIANS'
IN APRIL 18 DAILY TABLOID THE TORONTO SUN.

BEGIN TEXT

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSED 80 PERCENT CANADIAN CONTENT
RULE DESIGNED TO TORPEDO TIME MAGAZINE'S CANADIAN EDITION HAS
ALL THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A CURE MORE DANGEROUS THAN THE DISEASE.
THE GOVERNMENT MAY NOT INTEND TO USE THE CONTENT RULE TO CONTROL
THE PRESS, BUT ITS EFFECT WILL BE TO INTERFERE WITH BASIC AND
ESSENTIAL PRESS FREEDOM.

OF COURSE THE GOVERNMENT WANTS TO KNOCK OUT TIME AND ONLY
TIME. BUT EXCLUDING TIME FROM RECEIVING TAX CREDITS IS TRICKY,
BECAUSE IT MIGHT WELL QUALIFY AS CANADIAN-OWNED. WHICH WE
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ALL KNOW IT ISN T. READER'S DIGEST ISN'T IMPORTANT.NO ONE

MINDS IT. MACLEANS MAGAZINE ONLY WANTS TIME REMOVED AS
COMPETITION, THE CHICKENS.SEN. DAVEY THINKS THE GLOBE'S
OPPOSITION TO THE CONTENT IDEA IS MOTIVATED THROUGH CONFLICT
OF INTEREST. AN UNBECOMING SUGGESTION. WELL, WE'VE NO CONFLICT
OF INTEREST AND WE THINK THE GLOBE'S POSITION IS DEAD ON.
(THE STAR, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS TRAPPED BY ITS KNEE-JERK
NATIONALISM.)PERHAPS THE GLOBE IS EXTRA SENSITIVE BECAUSE IF
THERE WERE AN 80 PERCENT CANADIAN CONTENT RULE, ON SOME DAYS IT
WOULD HAVE DIFFICULTY QUALIFYING AS CANADIAN (SO FULL IS IT
WITH NEW YORK TIMES ANDECONOMIST AND FOREIGN AGENCY REPORTS).
IT WOULD BE LESS HYPOCRITICAL IF THE GOVERNMENT WERE TO
LEGISLATE AGAINST TIME (CANADA) DIRECTLY-- TO PASS SPECIAL LAWS
RESTRICTING IT. THAT WAY, WHILE DISCRIMINATORY AND UNFAIR, AT
LEAST WOULD NOT THREATEN THE FREEDOM OF CANADIAN PUBLICATIONS
TO PRINT WHAT THEY WANT.ALL GOVERNMENTS, AT EVERY LEVEL,
PAY HOMAGE TO THE PRINCIPLE OF PRESS FREEDOM. YET EVERY
GOVERNMENT, AT EVERY LEVEL, TRIES TO MANIPULATE AND MANAGE
THE PRESS. EVERY GOVERNMENT TENDS TO REGARD AS 'OBJECTIVE'
THAT COVERAGE WHICH IS KIND, OR NOT TOO CRITICAL OF IT.
IN OUR VIEW EVERY PUBLICATION IN THE COUNTRY, RADICAL,
ORTHODOX OR REACTIONARY, SHOULD RALLY TO DEFEAT THE 80
PERCENT CANADIAN CONTENT SCHEME. NO GOVERNMENT IS TO BE
TRUSTED TOO FAR WHEN IT COMES TO PRESERVING PRESS FREEDOM,
INDEPENDENCE AND INDIVIDUALITY.
END TEXT
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